

Name:

Terri Spencer (Facebook page- <https://www.facebook.com/DrTerriSpencer>)

How long have you lived in the L'Anse Creuse Community?

I have lived in Harrison Township with my family for more than 20 years.

Have you served on any school or district committees? If so, please list committees and your role (chair, co-chair, or participant).

District Strategic Planning Committee, Participant

Professional Development Committee, Speaker

Do you attend Board of Education meetings, if so how often?

Yes, I always attend Board meetings whenever I can. Since 2011, while serving Oakland Intermediate School District (Oakland Schools) as Deputy Superintendent, my contract required that I attend the ISD Board meetings and these meetings were also held on Monday evenings which were in conflict with the L'Anse Creuse Board of Education meetings. Since retiring this summer, I have attended every Board meeting since August 15 and plan to continue to do so in the future.

Have you served as a volunteer in the community? If so, for what organization?

I have volunteered my time for the following organizations:

Boy Scouts of America- For five years, I served as a volunteer as the Pack Master of Cub Scout Pack #96 that met at South River Elementary School and as a Den Leader where I met with cub scouts at my home for weekly meetings. We worked to involve the boys in many service projects in the community (i.e. trash pick-up alongside roads, sorting food at Gleaner's food bank, and helping senior citizens improve their quality of life.

L'Anse Creuse Little League- My husband and I have volunteered time over the past 15 years to support, assist, coach and promote boys participation on L'Anse Creuse Little League Baseball teams.

St. Hubert's Church- My family and I volunteered our time over the years to support church activities like the St. Hubert's Fall Festival and the Religious Education Program.

Charity Support- I regularly volunteer support to numerous charitable and service organizations--some include Goodwill , American Veterans, Salvation Army, Turning Point, Gleaner's Food Bank, American Cancer Society and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Family:

Spouse:

My husband, Scott and I have been married for 32 years. He works as an automotive engineer for Ford Motor Company in Livonia. We both enjoy time with our family and friends while engaging in all kinds of outdoor activities like snowmobiling, downhill skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, golf, boating and travelling in Michigan--especially in state and national parks. Scott also enjoys working with our boys in organizing and coaching L'Anse Creuse Little League baseball teams in our community.

Children: We have three wonderful sons that have attended South River Elementary School, Middle School Central, and L'Anse Creuse High School. Jerrod (22 years old) and Christopher (19 years old) graduated from L'Anse Creuse High School in 2012 and 2016 and our youngest son, Thomas (16 years old) is a Junior (Class of 2018) at LC HS this year. We are very proud of our boys and their many accomplishments--they have all been very successful in school and work and are wonderful members of our family and community!

Jerrod graduated from college in December of 2016 and is currently working for Fetter Performance Auto Repair as a full-time automotive technician. He volunteers his time making automotive repairs for people in the community that can not afford to pay for repairs needed to keep their car running so they can get to work or school. He also donates his time when he can to provide transportation for people who don't have a way to get to the grocery store, school or work.

Christopher graduated from LC HS this year and will attend Michigan Technological University in the Fall of 2017 to study Mechanical Engineering. He earned many awards and scholarships including nine honor cords and the National Honor Society Merit Award from LC HS. He currently works for Printing by Johnson, a wonderful family-owned print shop in Mount Clemens and is taking his first year of college classes at Macomb Community College. Over the years, Christopher has volunteered his time for numerous school and community causes and events--some include, the L'Anse Creuse Little League Baseball, Thanksgiving Santa Parade, Walk for Breast Cancer, the YMCA, and Gleaners Food Bank.

Thomas is currently dual-enrolled at LC HS for three classes and Macomb Community College for three classes. He currently works for Tim Horton's and maintains a small lawn service business that he started when he was 14 years old. He plans to study architectural design in the future and volunteers his time for the YMCA as a camp youth counselor, charity events and the Gleaners Food Bank.

How many in LCPS? All our boys have received a great education in the L'Anse Creuse School District and have had a good learning experiences while attending school at South River Elementary School, Middle School Central and the L'Anse Creuse High School. We so appreciate the hard work and dedication of the teachers, counselors and school leaders and staff that have had a such a positive impact on our boys.

Career:

Early in my career, I served business and banking organizations as a leasing administrator, bookkeeper and consultant and for the past 30 years I have served educational organizations in rural, suburban and urban communities as a Teacher (Pre-K -Grade 12), Gifted Education Coordinator, Math/Science Computer Specialist, Technology Consultant, Director of Technology, Chief Academic Officer, Superintendent of Schools and Deputy Superintendent at the Oakland ISD (Oakland Schools). I retired in June to consult with school leaders in Michigan and other states to significantly increase student achievement and engagement in learning.

Education:

I completed my undergraduate studies at Iowa State University and received my Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary Education and Child Development. I continued my graduate studies at Eastern Michigan University where I earned a Master of Arts degree in Educational Technology, a Specialist of Arts degree in Educational Leadership and a Doctor of Education degree in Educational Leadership with a cognate area in curriculum.

What do you think is the purpose of the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools Board of Education?

The purpose of the Board of Education is to have elected representatives from the community come together and discuss school related issues with their Superintendent and develop/revise policies that help the district achieve their goals to increase student achievement and engagement in learning.

In addition, the Board of Education is responsible for hiring and evaluating the Superintendent who serves as the CEO for the school district.

Research indicates that the Board of Education has an impact on the quality of education of students in the district (Center for Public Education, 2011) and as such, they identified eight characteristics of effective school boards. In order to increase effectiveness and impact on student achievement a Board of Education should:

1. commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision
2. have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to help all children reach their learning potential.
3. be accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.

4. cultivate a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.
5. be data savvy; the Board should embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
6. support and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.
7. lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and mutual trust.
8. take part in team development and training, sometimes with the superintendent, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts.

What particular or added dimensions would you bring to the Board if voted in?

I have had over 30 years of experience as an educational leader in almost every area of school administration--superintendent, academic leadership, school finance, human resources, educational technology, maintenance and operations, and grant management. I believe that my education and experience along with established relationships with leaders at the Michigan Department of Education, as well as local and state leaders in districts where I have lived or worked in Macomb, Oakland, Wayne, Ingham and Livingston counties have helped me develop a deep understanding about almost any educational issues from different perspectives. I believe that the knowledge and experience that I have acquired along with relationships that I have built, will provide a resource at the Board table to quickly address inaccurate information or erroneous perceptions with factual information (including historical rationale) that would lead to more productive discussions and a more efficient and effective decision-making process.

Overall, I believe that my student-centered focus to increase student achievement and engagement in learning is aligned with some other Board members and I believe that my service on the Board would help unify the members into a more cohesive governance team that works with the superintendent for continuous improvement of the L'Anse Creuse Public Schools.

What do you feel are the three most positive aspects of L'Anse Creuse Public Schools?

1. Our wonderful children that go to school each day to learn the knowledge, skills and tools needed to become successful as a member of a family, the community and the world of work.
2. The overall quality of the teachers, school/district leaders and staff.

3. Our community's culture and the beautiful rivers, parks and land that surround Lake St. Clair as well as a diverse community of people, businesses and Selfridge ANG Base that support a quality educational system.

What do you feel are the three greatest challenges facing L'Anse Creuse Public Schools?

1. Decreasing funding levels for public education and legislative action that is harmful to public education and often runs counter to effective practices that research shows can have a significant positive impact on the teaching and learning process.

2. The dysfunction of the district governance team. It prevents the Board and Superintendent from forming a united team with strong collaboration and mutual trust and respect. Left unchecked, this dysfunction will effect the district's ability to attract the best and brightest candidates for the superintendent and other district leadership positions.

3. Finding a highly-qualified and experienced instructional leader that will serve as our next superintendent and who will inspire and engage the entire school community to create a world-class educational system for our children.

What is your understanding of how our schools are financed? How could the district maintain a balanced budget?

I have a great understanding of school finance and through formal coursework in school finance, I earned the Chief School Business Official endorsement on my administrative certificate. In the leadership roles that I have served in for suburban, urban and rural districts, I have managed budgets up to \$152M that have included bond/millage funds, grant funds, general funds, and special education funds. Funding for schools comes from a variety of local, state and federal funding sources (with different requirements and reporting regulations) and through expert management of these funds, the district can maximize use of these funds to make progress on local district priorities to achieve their goals.

In order to maintain a balanced budget, you need to monitor the district finances closely and continuously look for ways to increase revenue and decrease costs while maintaining quality programs and services necessary to achieve the district goals.

What is your assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the overall operations of L'Anse Creuse Public Schools?

I don't have enough information to assess strengths and weaknesses of the operations of the district. Overall, it appears that the district is well run and allocates resources appropriately.

If you win a seat on the Board of Education, what would you seek to accomplish?

My passion is to work with others to build educational systems that inspire students to become lifelong learners. If elected to the L'Anse Creuse Board of Education I will work with fellow Board members to form a strong governance team with our new superintendent to create a world-class educational system. Innovative and relevant learning environments that we will develop will inspire our children's hearts and minds to achieve success and become contributing members of the family, community and workplace.

To what extent do you think Board members should be involved in legislative activities?

I think that it is very important for the Board of Education to be involved in legislative activities--not Board members. The Board of Education as a governing body along with the Superintendent should keep abreast of legislative issues and discuss the potential impact on the district. Through discussion, the Board of Education and Superintendent can develop a position on legislative issues as well as identify specific strategies to take action including who will be the spokesperson for the Board to communicate the position/actions developed by the Board of Education--not individual Board members.

Additional comments:

In anticipating the wonderful opportunity to serve on the L'Anse Creuse Board of Education, the following are some of my goals and philosophies that provides a little more information about who I am and what is important to me:

Professional Goal: To create a world-class educational system that supports educators to provide engaging and relevant learning experiences that inspire students to become lifelong learners and successful members of their family, community and workplace.

Educational Philosophy: I believe that children need to be actively engaged in the learning process through a curriculum that is meaningful, challenging and relevant to our technological society. I also believe that all children can learn and that success breeds success and that each time a child succeeds it motivates him/her to seek out new learning opportunities.

Planning Goal: To support a shared vision and strategic action plan that is developed by analyzing data and gathering input from the school community to determine their beliefs about education, needs of their young people and characteristics of the society that they will live and work.

Curriculum Goal: To support the development of a challenging and relevant curriculum that is aligned with state standards and that provides students with many opportunities for success.

Technology Goal: To support the effective integration of technology into the curriculum, instructional and decision making processes to improve student learning.

Financial Goal: To work with district and community leaders to secure traditional and alternative financial resources and develop strong partnerships to support the work related to achieving the district's goals and strategic long-range plan.

Human Resource Goal: To support the recruitment and retention of highly skilled and productive employees as well as an organizational environment where people succeed and are recognized for their achievements.

Leadership Philosophy: Lead by example and treat other people the way you would like to be treated. When making decisions, involve people most effected by the decision and gather as much information and input as time permits.

Communication Philosophy: Communicate often and communicate well. Listen closely; understand people and celebrate difference of opinion. I truly enjoy interacting with people because I learn something new or understand a new perspective with every conversation.

My Passion: I am driven to make a difference in the lives of others. . .especially children. My top priority is to support the work to transform learning environments into exciting, stimulating, interesting places that children of all ages enjoy because they are actively engaged in meaningful work and achieve success along the way. These key elements are necessary in order to cultivate lifelong learners who are productive and responsible members of society.

I embrace new challenges with enthusiasm, perseverance, and determination and look forward to the opportunity to serve the community on the L'Anse Creuse Board of Education. Thank you!